

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:THGERTH/RN
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, HU

SUBJECT: UPI STORY LINKING EXCHANGES AGREEMENT AND CROWN

REF: STATE 74670

1. APRIL 7 WASHINGTON POST RAN PAGE 9 ARTICLE HEADLINED
"U.S., HUNGARY SIGN EXCHANGE PACT" BY UPI: QUOTE: THE
UNITED STATES AND HUNGARY YESTERDAY SIGNED A CULTURAL
AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WHICH MAY OPEN THE WAY
AFTER 32 YEARS TO THE RETURN OF ST. STEPHEN'S CROWN, THE
SYMBOL OF HUNGARIAN SOVEREIGNTY.

THE 800-YEAR-OLD CROWN WAS TURNED OVER TO THE U.S.
ARMY IN 1945 TO KEEP IT OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE OCCUPYING
SOVIETS.

TO RUSSIAN DEMANDS IT BE HANDED BACK, THE UNITED
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STATES REPLIED THAT AN OFFICIAL HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT HAD
DEPOSITED IT WITH U.S. AUTHORITIES FOR SAFEKEEPING. THE
AMERICANS SAID POSTWAR U.S.-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS REMAINED
TOO UNFRIENDLY TO DISCUSS ITS RETURN.

"THE U.S. POSITION REMAINS THE SAME," A STATE DEPART-
MENT SPOKESMAN SAID YESTERDAY. BUT HE ADDED, "WE ATTACH

IMPORTANCE TO THIS AGREEMENT, AND IT MAY SUPPLY THE NECESSARY IMPROVEMENT IN THE CLIMATE. A DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAID ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE ARTHUR HARTMAN IS NOW IN BUDAPEST DISCUSSING VARIOUS MATTERS--INCLUDING POSSIBLE RETURN OF THE CROWN. TO HUNGARY'S COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT THE CROWN HAS BEEN A SYMBOL OF LEGITIMACY. UNQUOTE

2. THE STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN IS AT VARIANCE WITH THE CLEARED GUIDANCE SENT YOU REFTEL. JIM ANDERSON, WHO WROTE PIECE, INFORMED US THAT LENGTH OF HIS STORY HAD BEEN DRASTICALLY CUT IN PRINTED VERSION RESULTING IN DISTORTION. ALTHOUGH UNFORTUNATE, WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE BEST NOT TO CALL ATTENTION TO IT BY ATTEMPTING TO CORRECT THE RECORD.

3. FOR YOUR GUIDANCE IN REPLYING TO ANY PRESS INQUIRIES, WE FURNISH FOLLOWING:

Q. SOME RECENT REPORTING HAS SUGGESTED A LINKAGE BETWEEN THE SIGNING APRIL 6 OF A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND HUNGARY AND RETURN TO HUNGARY OF THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN. CAN YOU COMMENT ON THIS?

A. THERE ARE NO PRESENT PLANS TO RETURN THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN TO HUNGARY. OUR POSITION REMAINS THAT THE ISSUE OF THE CROWN WILL BE ADDRESSED IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONTEXT OF IMPROVEMENT IN US-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS. WE HAVE NEVER LINKED RETURN OF THE CROWN TO THE RESOLUTION OF ANY SPECIFIC ISSUE OR ISSUES IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

4. NO QUESTION ON THIS SUBJECT WAS POSED AT DEPARTMENT'S APRIL 7 PRESS BRIEFING.
VANCE

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